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5/10/94

Mr. Stephen Ambrose
Rutgers Center for Historical Analysis
88 College Avenue
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Dear Mr. Ambrose,

I suppose I should not be surprised at your refusal to answer my question, "what basis you had for making the statements so widely used to sell and popularize a book that to one who knows those facts (referring to what precedes in my letter) is an overt ~~fraud~~ and deliberate fraud." I referred to Posner's admittedly mistitled Case Closed.

Your refusal to answer when you took the time for arrogant pontification to others does speak for itself.

To the degree possible I have been devoting myself to perfecting the record on the JFK assassination and its investigations to the degree now possible for me. I'm 81 and in impaired health.

My book of which I told you, rather severely reduced in size in the belief that what was not eliminated is more than enough to make the Case Open point, ^{has} been in the stores for some ~~time~~ ^{time}, more than a month. I have heard nothing from Posner about it. He cannot fault it on fact. I regret that it was rushed, the rushing having made a few problems that do not influence the text at all.

In failing to respond you have made the record that will exist for history and, as other than a professional historian, can be taken as your own reflection of your regard for your reputation, for all the honors you have won.

That you would neither justify what you did ^{not} ~~express~~ any regret for it was out of my mind until another historian and a sociologist sent me a copy of your review of Reeves' book in Foreign Affairs, of which you are a book review editor. I was taken by some of your words and with your silence when your own reputation was involved in your grossly uninformed and uninhibited praises of Posner's whoring with our history, I do not expect any response. But I do ask you the basis for this language ^{usage} ~~from~~ from that review because I also studied these matters:

"Kennedy botched the Bay of Pigs because of his inexperience, aggressiveness and a flawed decision-making apparatus. In the missile crisis he took the gravest possible risk over a relatively small issue and then lucked through. He was the central American agent in the plot against Diem, the point of which was to get on with ~~the~~ winning the war. ... Did he miss a unique opportunity to get rid of Castro?"

You are on the faculty ^{of} ~~a~~ "Center for Historical Analysis," I am not. But I know more than a mere something about what Posner did that you ^{are} ~~prised~~ ^{prized} so highly and something about the matters you refer to in this review, where what you write is propaganda, not

history or historical analysis, so I ask you if you have solid support for what I quote?

Kennedy inherited the Bay of ~~pigs~~ Pigs. It was not his concept. What alternatives did he have once he inherited it, practical alternatives? And how did he, personally, "botch" it with what the Eisenhower/Nixon administration gave him to cope with?

The missile crisis "small issue" you do not identify was getting those USSR missiles out of Cuba. That is "small"? So small it was feared it could incinerate the world?

"... he took the gravest possible risk" in eliminating that problem, you say. You do not say whether there were any alternatives or whether, if there were, any were less of a "possible risk."

You seem to be saying that the United States had a right to invade Cuba. Where does it or did it get that right? From the United Nations? Our Latin American treaties and other arrangements with those nations? Under any provision of international law?

You also do not say what your "unique opportunity to get rid of Castro" is or was. In a sense perhaps that is wise because I am confident that you will not now say what that "unique opportunity" was, but I do ask it of you.

You say of Viet Nam that Kennedy was what at the least is ambiguous, "the central agent in the plot against Diem" and that this had "the point ... to get on with winning the war." Is the "central agent" the one who conceives the plot? The one who implements it? Or sees to its execution? Is this really any more than hate-Kennedy propaganda? And how were we going to win that war with or without the end of Diem? You say it was for us to win that war but his record is the exact opposite, as reflected in the NSAMs and as General James Gavin told me when I interviewed him in 1967. And what that NSAM says and what General Gavin told me - and there is much else available on this, as you should know - is the exact opposite of "Kennedy's goal was victory in Vietnam, that he had no intention of withdrawing."

You are among those who make it clear that as war is too important to leave to the generals, so is our history too precious to leave to professional historians.

If the foregoing and your ignorant praises of Posner's fraud represent ~~this~~ "historical analysis" we are in deep trouble and our young will be educated to even more ignorance.

I suppose it is the prejudice and ignorance you reflect in this review that can in a way explain your lusty endorsement of Posner's commercialization and exploitation of that great tragedy that leads you to look forward to the "Kennedy revisionist school" in your review. Is it that you hate the man and all he stood for that drives you to self self-defanations, to such impeachments of your own professional qualifications and character? To prostitute your legitimate qualifications so shamelessly?

I'm sorry, as I told you, that my typing cannot be any better.

Sincerely,

Harold Weisberg
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